

take your friends up for a little shot into space, shouldn't you pay a few bucks in taxes?

I don't think it is unreasonable.

The same thing holds true for these corporations. When we look at the biggest corporations and most profitable in America, too darned many of them pay no Federal taxes.

What is going on here?

We live in a country where success leads to wealth, and wealth leads, I think, to some social responsibility, and that includes paying your taxes.

Under President Biden's Build Back Better agenda, we want to extend the child tax credit, give working families a little breathing room, and reduce child poverty in America. Now, if they want to come up and criticize us for reducing child poverty in America, so be it, but call it for what it is. We are putting our tax policy on the side of families with kids.

For our Republican colleagues who say families like Lydia's don't need any help, they do. And we cannot walk away from them.

Not a single Republican will vote for this reconciliation bill. We know it. They didn't vote for the rescue plan. That is just their choice. I'm sorry to say that we are not going to build back America better unless we change some policy and tax policy to help working families makes a difference.

I mentioned to you how the deficit skyrocketed during the Trump administration. Well, the Senator from Kentucky comes and repeats over and over again: Well, they are going to do it again; they are going to run up the deficit.

We have a plan to pay for the programs that we are talking about, and it means putting a new tax responsibility on people who are wealthy.

The President made it clear: I don't want taxes going up on anybody making less than \$400,000 a year.

So any tax policy we have will affect the wealthy and corporations that aren't paying their fair share. That is our approach. It is quite a bit different than the Republican approach.

Building back better is also going to do something about easing long-term inflationary pressure and making life affordable for families. The things we will invest in, in the Build Back Better agenda, are spread over a number of years, and they will pave the way for an enduring economic recovery. These policies will help parents get back to work by making safe, reliable childcare more accessible.

I don't know what the final negotiations will be on Build Back Better. We know the amount of money involved is going to be less than we originally thought. We are going to have to change some things, but I certainly hope that this idea of childcare—affordable, quality, safe childcare—is part of the final package.

It means so much to so many working families, particularly to moms who can't get back to work unless they

have peace of mind and have their kids in good hands while they are working.

Everyone, from single mothers to our Nation's economists, can tell you the best way to stabilize the American economy is by supporting working families.

In fact, the report by Moody's concluded that the Republican fearmongering about inflation—and we hear it every day on the floor—Moody's called it “overdone.” Moody's is hardly a Democratic publication. But the fear of inflation is one of the reasons Republicans give for not wanting to even talk about changing tax policy in America.

This pandemic has shown us the cracks in our economy. This Build Back Better package will get us to the point where we can start to rebuild it in the right way—give families financial relief, invest in our Nation's economic potential.

The President said in New Jersey—and I couldn't agree with him more—we have never gone wrong in America investing in the people in this country. We have a lot of hard-working people. They do it every single day for their families. Those who come to this country keep up the tradition.

But they need the tools to succeed. One of those tools is education. I hope we can find a way to expand opportunities in education for training for our workers into the 21st century.

Talk about giving the store to the Chinese, if we don't invest in our workers and their training and education in the next generation to make sure that it is smarter than the last, then, we are going to lose ground to the Chinese.

I wanted to say one last word here. I see the Senator from Ohio is here so I am going to be quick about this.

It is easy to overlook—take a look at this chart. It is easy to overlook computer chips, small pieces of silicon. They power so many products and appliances, that we use every day, that we don't pay much attention. They are in our computers, smartphones, life-saving medical equipment, appliances, microwaves, and our cars—dozens even in the cars that we drive.

There is a global shortage of microchips. That is one of the reasons why it has slowed down production of new vehicles and why the market for used vehicles is tighter than usual, because of these little chips. And we have become too reliant on foreign countries to produce them.

In a bill that we considered a few months ago, we put direct investment in America in building microchips. I think that is money well spent. I hope it works. I think it can. If we can provide these microchips, we don't have to wait for some company in Taiwan or China to send us this critical element that is needed to build all of these products.

The global shortage of computer chips and the higher cost to consumers is one example of how we failed to invest in our Nation's resilience. I have

to say that education and investment in American production and workers is the best way to get this economy moving again. We need to have a reserve supply of these chips so that we can build the autos and provide for the assembly lines and stabilize prices for everything from toasters to tractors.

It is an important undertaking, and I hope my colleagues will realize that Build Back Better, the reconciliation bill, is dedicated to the same premise.

#### NOMINATION OF MYRNA PEREZ

Madam President, let me close with reference to a vote that we face today.

We have another qualified nominee, Myrna Perez, for the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. She is really competent and experienced. She has been handling complex civil litigation and will be ready to serve on the Second Circuit on day one.

She has earned degrees from Yale University, Harvard University, and Columbia Law School. After graduating, she clerked for the U.S. District Court for the District of Pennsylvania and the Third Circuit Court of Appeals. She has dedicated her career to defending Americans' right to vote through her work at the Brennan Center for Justice, where she serves as the director of the Voting Rights and Election section. In this capacity, she has led their efforts to defend the Voting Rights Act and to protect, as John Lewis said, this “precious, almost sacred right.”

Far too few nominees to the Federal bench have significant experience in handling civil rights and voting rights matters. In Ms. Perez, the Senate has the opportunity to confirm a competent judge who will bring this experience to the bench. Importantly, she understands the difference between being an advocate and a judge. I have every confidence she will serve with diligence, fairness, and impartiality.

And she will also bring demographic diversity to the Second Circuit. She will be the first Latina to serve on that court since former Judge Sonia Sotomayor—now Justice Sotomayor.

Ms. Perez's nomination has received broad support—across the spectrum—from national civil rights groups, leaders in law enforcement, academics, faith leaders, as well as Senators from her own State, Senators Schumer and Gillibrand.

One group of police chiefs and sheriffs and prosecutors sent a letter extolling her virtues. I ask unanimous consent to have it printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

JULY 9, 2021.

Re Law Enforcement Support for Nomination of Myrna Pérez to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

Hon. CHARLES SCHUMER,  
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,  
Washington, DC.

Hon. RICHARD DURBIN,  
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,  
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,  
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate,  
Washington, DC.

Hon. CHARLES GRASSLEY,  
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary,  
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER SCHUMER, MINORITY LEADER MCCONNELL, CHAIRMAN DURBIN, and RANKING MEMBER GRASSLEY: As members of law enforcement, across the political spectrum, we write to express our support for the confirmation of Myrna Pérez to serve on the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. The undersigned include current and former police chiefs, sheriffs, and federal, state, and local chief prosecutors from jurisdictions throughout the United States.

Ms. Pérez' distinguished legal career includes leading the Brennan Center for Justice's Voting Rights and Election Program, serving as the Civil Rights Fellow at Relman, Dane & Colfax, and clerking for the Honorable Anita B. Brody of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania and Honorable Julio M. Fuentes of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. For nearly two decades, Ms. Pérez' primary concern has been honoring the Constitution to ensure that our nation's democracy is inclusive, voting rights are protected, and elections are administered fairly.

As leaders in law enforcement, we are deeply concerned with the rule of law and view public safety as intrinsically linked with the public's confidence and trust in our nation's democracy. Ms. Pérez has spent her entire career as a civil rights attorney and public servant, frequently working alongside the law enforcement community in efforts to restore federal and state voting rights for ex-offenders disenfranchised by a felony conviction. We are confident that Ms. Pérez will bring diversity of thought and experience to the federal bench and that her conviction for what is fair and just will strengthen the integrity of our nation's judiciary.

We respectfully urge the Senate Committee on the Judiciary to swiftly advance Ms. Pérez's nomination and for the Senate to confirm this exceptional nominee without delay.

Sincerely,

Jim Bueermann, Former President, National Police Foundation, Former Police Chief, Redlands, California;

Zachary W. Carter, Former Corporations Counsel, New York, New York, Former U.S. Attorney, Eastern District of New York;

Steve Conrad, Former Police Chief, Louisville, Kentucky;

Barry Grissom, Former U.S. Attorney, Kansas;

Ronald Hampton, Former Executive Director, National Black Police Association;

Peter Holmes, City Attorney, Seattle, Washington;

John Hummel, District Attorney, Deschutes County, Oregon;

James E. Johnson, Former Corporation Counsel, New York, New York, Former Undersecretary for Enforcement, U.S. Department of the Treasury;

Joel Merry, Sheriff, Sagadahoc County, Maine, Former President, Maine Sheriffs Association;

Melba Pearson, Former President, National Black Prosecutors Association, Former Assistant State Attorney, Miami-Dade County, Florida;

Richard Pocker, Former U.S. Attorney, Nevada;

Donald Raley, Former Police Chief, Artesia, New Mexico;

Kathleen O'Toole, Former Police Chief, Seattle, Washington, Former Police Commissioner, Boston, Massachusetts, Former Public Safety Secretary, Massachusetts.

Mr. DURBIN. Several faith leaders also submitted letters, including Rev. Allison DeFoor, who wrote that Ms. Perez is "an individual of the highest integrity. She is thoughtful and sound in her judgment and committed to principles of justice that transcend politics. She embodies the true meaning of public service and would be an exceptional federal judge."

Ms. Perez's nomination received bipartisan support in the Judiciary Committee.

In short, she is a seasoned litigator, ready to take on an important job. I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting her.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE BILL AND GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I am here on the floor again this evening to talk about the legislation that is before us.

One is the bipartisan infrastructure legislation that passed this Chamber with 69 votes. It is great for America. It addresses real problems we have in upgrading our infrastructure, but it also deals with competitiveness.

My colleague from Illinois just made a good point that we are in a global competition with other countries, including China. One reason we are not doing as well as we should is that the other countries are putting a lot more of their money into infrastructure—because it is good for their economies—and we are not.

As an example, China spends a lot more, as a percent of their GDP, on infrastructure than we do—much more. So bridges and roads and railways and ports—ports are a big problem right now—all of these would be improved and would make our economy, therefore, more efficient. As the economists say, that makes us more productive as a country and allows us to be able to compete globally.

Right now, with these supply chain issues, whether it is freight on the rail system or whether it is our highway system, or whether it is our port system or our waterway system, all of which need help, it would be easier for us to deal with this transition we are going through if we had better infrastructure.

This infrastructure bill, unfortunately, has gotten intertwined with another bill over in the House of Representatives. So, although it passed here on its own merits—standing alone as an infrastructure bill with no new

tax increases, no tax increases—when it got to the House of Representatives, the Speaker of the House wanted to combine it with another bill, which is what has been called around here the reconciliation bill, which refers to a process here in the U.S. Senate—a rare process—where, instead of having the normal 60 votes—a supermajority for legislation—under reconciliation, a couple of times a year, you can have something that only needs to get 50 votes, assuming that you have the Presidency in your party because then the Vice President, as the President of the Senate, can come and break the tie to get to 51. So that is the reconciliation process that the Democrats want to use for this other bill.

What is the other bill?

It is a huge tax-and-spend bill.

Just as I believe infrastructure would be good for our country, it is actually counterinflationary based on the economists.

Why?

Because you are doing long-term investments in capital assets. That is good for pushing back against inflation. More spending on social programs, which is what is in the reconciliation bill, would add to inflation at a time when we already have a huge problem there.

Also, the huge amount of spending would be unprecedented. We will talk about that in a minute, depending on how much spending is in there.

So that is one bill, and the infrastructure bill is separate.

I, again, call on my colleagues in the House of Representatives—the leadership over there—to let the infrastructure bill go, allow it to be voted on on its merits. Don't tie it as a political hostage to this reconciliation bill, the tax-and-spend bill, that the Democrats have had a really hard time passing through the system. Infrastructure needs to stand on its own. The American people deserve that. It has been almost 3 months—almost 3 months—since the Senate passed it, and people are waiting, and they deserve the help.

By the way, it helps in a broad range, not just on the roads and bridges and the rail and the ports and the waterways I talked about; it helps with resilience to push back against an actual disaster—something all of our States are experiencing.

It is something that helps with regard to our energy policy—it makes us more competitive—and, yes, it encourages us to use the resources we have but to do so through carbon capture. And it encourages us to move to more electric vehicles; it encourages us to be more competitive on that front as well.

Infrastructure means, also, digital infrastructure. It actually, for the first time ever, provides a huge boost to having high-speed broadband spread all around the country, particularly in our rural areas, like in Ohio, where we have some areas—about a third of our State—that do not have access to it. People can't do the appropriate telehealth that they want to do. They certainly can't do the telelearning they